

2022 SAMHSA SOAR MARCH E-NEWS

The Time Is Right for SOAR and Social Work



THE TIME IS RIGHT
FOR SOAR AND SOCIAL WORK



The SAMHSA SOAR TA Center is pleased to release its latest issue brief [*Integrating SOAR into Social Work Education*](#), during [*Social Work Month*](#). As many communities continue to expand the implementation of SOAR, collaborations with community stakeholders are of the utmost importance to address key barriers. Despite the numerous benefits of Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) to individuals and communities, many agencies cite limited capacity to meet their community's need for SOAR assistance. University Schools of Social Work are poised to play a critical role in helping communities to address this challenge by integrating SOAR training or SOAR work into existing social work education.

[Download the Issue Brief](#)

Collaboration With Ohio's Department of Developmental Disabilities Leads to SOAR Funding Success!

The SOAR State Lead Agency in Ohio, the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO), worked with the State's Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) and the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council to establish funding for the COHHIO SOAR program.

- The SOAR State Team Lead at the time, Amy Lamerson, provided SOAR support to address DODD concerns about community members who were receiving DODD rental assistance and were also in the Social Security Administration's (SSA's) "non-payment" status due to administrative issues. These issues included missing/incomplete guardianship paperwork (transfer of guardianship/guardianship of finance), misreporting trial work periods, or missing information for Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) accounts.
- COHHIO offered to provide training and technical assistance to the county's Developmental Disability (DD) Boards staff and the state's DODD rental assistance staff on the necessary paperwork and the process of reinstating payment status to beneficiaries and community members. Multiple trainings led to further investigations into the needs of DODD constituents.
- These collaborations and relationships led to an opportunity to provide training and technical assistance to the county's DD Board service support administrators during a 1-year pilot. The pilot led to funding through 2026 with the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council.

In honor of [Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month](#) this March, reach out to your [State DD Council](#) to see how you can partner to promote SOAR for individuals with developmental disabilities.

See How SOAR Works

New Field-Spanning Webinar Series: Equity in Action

Equity in *ACTION*

a webinar series

MARCH 10

MACARTHUR **SJC**:
CENTERING EQUITY,
ENGAGING COMMUNITIES,
TRANSFORMING SYSTEMS



MARCH 17

LEVERAGING SAMHSA
SMVF TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE TO
IMPROVE SYSTEMS



MARCH 24

LEVERAGING SAMHSA
SOAR TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE TO
IMPROVE SYSTEMS



March 10, March 17, and March 24, 2022, 3:00-4:30 p.m. ET

Join this essential series of webinars addressing equity in key behavioral health-related fields, anchored by three leading providers of technical assistance (TA):

- the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge (SJC);
- the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Service Members, Veterans, and their Families (SMVF) TA Center; and
- the SAMHSA SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) TA Center.

The series will feature speakers with lived experience in the following areas and people who work in related service-providing systems:

- individuals involved in or at risk of involvement in the criminal justice system;
- SMVF at risk of suicide and mental and substance use disorders; and
- people experiencing or at risk of homelessness who have a serious mental illness, medical impairment, or co-occurring substance use disorder.

Register for the SJC Webinar

Register for the SMVF Webinar

Register for the SOAR Webinar

Houston Gets Funding for SOAR-Dedicated Positions

Three Houston-area agencies (Texas) are the new sub-recipients of local grant funding from The Coalition for the Homeless of Houston to support the development of SOAR-dedicated

positions! The new funding source comes from the coalition's Community COVID Housing Program (CCHP) initiative, which seeks to identify creative methods to revamp the city's homeless response systems. The funding awards are a combination of American Rescue Plan Act funds and private foundation funding. The identified agencies will support six full-time SOAR case managers, two SOAR navigators, a SOAR supervisor, and a psychiatrist through this funding! The three sub-recipients of these funds are Avenue 360, SEARCH Homeless Services, and Healthcare for the Homeless Houston.

SOAR Voices: A Second Chance for Recovery From California

Erin Dooley from Shasta County Health and Human Services in Redding, California, wrote in to share this incredible SOAR success story:



“John Doe* had been unhoused for years, struggling with substance use and a below-knee amputation that he couldn't care for while on the street. He was unsure because he had been denied at initial application and reconsideration.

When I explained the SOAR process and how beneficial the SOAR model is in gaining approvals, he was excited not to be ‘just another application’ but to tell his story. John went to each doctor's appointment, met with me on a weekly basis, and even before his approval from an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) hearing, thanked me for simply treating him like a human and taking the time to listen to him.

After completing the SOAR process with John, we filed his appeal in mid-July. Using the medical records, I found that I could counter each point in his denial received at reconsideration, especially the claim that he could “use his arms and legs in a normal manner.” Both the initial claim and reconsideration failed to include John's hand being reattached after an accident 20 years prior, leaving his hand immobile. In reading the Blue Book listings for abnormality of a major joint (1.18) and amputation at or above the ankle (1.20C), I was confident that each requirement had been met for the listings. After consulting with Dan at the SAMHSA SOAR TA Center, I was ready to submit an On The Record (OTR) review, outlining how the criteria for each listing had been met and were backed by medical evidence. On August 5, the OTR was submitted. On October 1, I was contacted and told that the OTR had been accepted. On October 18, John was found fully favorable without the need for an ALJ hearing! He is now working with a housing social worker to secure permanent housing and is planning a trip to Idaho to visit his children, neither of which would have been possible without securing his SSI/State Supplementary Payment.”

[Submit Your SOAR Success](#)

**Sharing Our Successes stories are edited for brevity and clarity. All beneficiary names have been changed to protect anonymity.*

[SOARing Over Lunch Conference Call](#)

March 15, 2022, 1:00-2:00 p.m. ET

Add SOARing Over Lunch to Your Calendar

In Case You Missed It

[SOAR Webinar Rewind! SSI for Children: Engaging Families for Successful SOAR Applications](#)

In this webinar, held on February 3, 2021, seasoned SOAR providers talk about their experiences building relationships with families and other professionals from child-serving systems in their communities. In addition, SOAR providers learned how to collaborate with medical providers to document a child's disability more effectively.

Application Tip! Submitting Applications, Part 1: Ensuring the Critical Components Are Included

You have done the work, and the time has come to submit your completed SOAR application to SSA, but first, you want to make sure that the application includes all the SOAR critical components! A great resource to use is the [SOAR Checklist for Initial Claims](#). Not only is the checklist great to use as a cover sheet, but it also indicates for yourself and SSA that you included all SOAR critical components!

Partner Updates

[New Resource From the Homeless and Housing Resource Center](#)

The Homeless and Housing Resource Center has released a new toolkit, [Helping Individuals Experiencing Homelessness Obtain Identification Documents](#). This resource provides guidance on helping individuals who are experiencing homelessness obtain identification (ID) documents, including birth certificates, Social Security cards, state-issued IDs, DD214s, and Green Cards.

SOAR Jobs



- **Connecticut:** New Reach is seeking a SOAR Specialist to provide SOAR services and healthcare coordination in Fairfield County, Connecticut.
- **Florida:** South County Mental Health Center, Inc., is seeking a full-time SOAR Benefits Specialist to assist people applying for disability benefits utilizing the SOAR model in Delray Beach, Florida.
- **Illinois:** Legal Aid is seeking a full-time Supervisory Attorney to manage the HIV Legal Project and supervise staff providing SOAR services in Chicago, Illinois.
- **Texas:** IntegralCare is seeking a full-time SOAR specialist based in Austin, Texas.
- **Texas:** Metrocare Services is seeking a SOAR-proficient professional based in Dallas, Texas, to assist individuals in obtaining benefits following incarceration.

Learn more about these positions on the [SOARWorks website](#). Do you have a job posting you would like to share with the SOAR community? Please submit it to the [SAMHSA SOAR TA Center](#)!

More From SOAR



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) Technical Assistance (TA) Center is sponsored by SAMHSA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

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